

**FY 2004 Hospital Wage Index Development Timetable**  
**(November 2002 through October 2003)**

<b><u>Date:</u></b>	<b><u>Task:</u></b>
Through November 2002	Collection and verification of wage data and documentation submitted by hospitals.
November 15, 2002	Deadline for fiscal intermediaries (FIs) to complete all desk reviews for hospital wage data and transmit Worksheet S-3 data to the Health Care Provider Cost Report Information System (HCRIS). At this stage, send the wage data to HCRIS, only. Do not send copies of the files to the Division of Acute Care (DAC).* <b>[Note: For hospitals affected by the filing extensions provided by Transmittal Number A-02-95, submit the wage data according to the instructions in that transmittal. For these hospitals, the deadline for completing the desk reviews and submitting the data directly to DAC is December 16, 2002.]</b>
<b>* After the November 15 deadline, any changes to hospitals' Worksheet S-3 wage data must be submitted directly to DAC in electronic, HCRIS hdt format, either as a file attachment via e-mail or on diskette via overnight mail delivery. With the exception of hospitals' wage data that are submitted according to Options 2, 3, or 4 of Transmittal Number A-02-95, <u>FIs must still submit cost report data directly to HCRIS</u>. Only copies of HCRIS files that include changes to the wage data are to be submitted to our office (DAC).</b>	
Early-Mid December	<b>Intermediaries must notify State hospital associations regarding hospitals that fail to respond to issues raised during the desk reviews.</b> The purpose of the letter is to inform the association and its member hospitals that a hospital's failure to respond to matters raised by the intermediary can result in lowering an area's wage index value and, therefore, lower Medicare payments for all hospitals in the area.
Mid December	Notice sent from CMS to FIs regarding the early January release of the preliminary wage data public use file and the early February deadline for hospitals to request revisions to the wage data as reflected in the preliminary file. Notice must be forwarded by FIs to hospitals they service to alert hospitals to the availability of the preliminary wage data file for their review, and to inform hospitals that this will be their last opportunity to request revisions.
January 10, 2003	Release of the preliminary wage data public use file on CMS web page and through public use files office. Hospitals will have approximately one month to review and verify the accuracy of

their wage data and to submit revision requests, including adequate supporting documentation, to their FIs.

February 10, 2003

Deadline for hospitals to request revisions to their Worksheet S-3 wage data as included in the January public use file and to provide documentation to support the request. FIs must receive the revision requests and supporting documentation by this date. FIs will have approximately two months to complete their reviews, make determinations, and transmit revised data to DAC.

April 1, 2003

Approximate date proposed rule will be published; includes proposed wage index, which is calculated based on the preliminary wage data from early February; 60-day public comment period and 45-day withdrawal deadline for hospitals applying for geographic reclassification.

April 4, 2003

Deadline for FIs to transmit revised Worksheet S-3 (in HCRIS format) wage data to DAC for inclusion in the final wage data. All data revisions to the January preliminary file (resulting from requests from hospitals, received by the early February deadline) must be transmitted by this date.

**Also, deadline for hospitals to request CMS' intervention in cases where the hospital disagrees with the FI's determination.**

Late April

Final wage data compiled and sent by CMS to FIs for verification. This verification of the final wage data by the FIs is necessary to ensure that the correct data for each hospital has been properly transmitted and received. The FIs will have approximately one week in which to complete the verification.

Notice sent from CMS to each FI regarding the early May release of the final wage data public use file and the early June deadline for hospitals to request corrections to the wage data as reflected in the final file. Notice must be forwarded by FIs to hospitals they service to alert hospitals to the availability of the final wage data file for their review, and to inform hospitals that this will be their last opportunity to request corrections to errors in the final data. Changes to data will be limited to situations involving errors by CMS or the FI that the hospital could not have known about before review of the final (May) wage data file. Data that was incorrect in the January preliminary wage data public use file, but for which no revision request was received by the early February deadline, will not be considered for correction at this stage.

May 9, 2003	Release of final wage data public use file on CMS web page and through public use files office. Hospitals will have approximately one month to verify their wage data and submit correction requests to <b>both</b> CMS and their FI to correct errors due to CMS or FI mishandling of the final wage data.
June 6, 2003	Deadline for hospitals to submit correction requests to <b>both</b> CMS and their FI to correct errors due to CMS or FI mishandling of the final wage data. We emphasize that data that was incorrect in the January preliminary wage data public use file, but for which no revision request was received by the early February deadline, will not be changed at this stage for inclusion in the wage index. Each correction request must include all information and supporting documentation needed for CMS and the FI to determine whether or not the hospital's request meets the criteria for a correction to their wage data at this point in the wage index development. The FIs and DAC will review each request upon receipt and consult to determine whether or not the request qualifies for correction of the final wage data.
August 1, 2003	Publication of the FY 2004 final rule; wage index includes final wage data corrections.
October 1, 2003	Effective date of FY 2004 wage index.